

# ODE TO A CROSS-DRESSING DUMPSTER



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The dumpster keeps architecture alive. It's how a building breathes. When you see a dumpster you can guess that the neighborhood you are seeing it in is pretty healthy.

When you view a construction site as a structural maternity ward, you notice that the dumpster is always present as midwife. And at the other end of the cycle, at the demise of a building, at a destruction site, there is also always a dumpster present, administering the last rites to a building before it's levelled.

Now doctor, if the city is your patient. Imagine you're up in a helicopter, viewing your patient from an aerial perspective. New York City itself is laid out there on the operating table of Manhattan Island. The streets are the arteries. Vehicular traffic is the circulation. Buildings are the major organs, that produce the byproducts that it is the function of the dumpster to transport. We need to do a blood count. The dumpster represents the white blood cells that absorb the excess and transport and dispense with it. Taking a dumpster count is like taking a blood count, or taking the temperature of a neighborhood. It tips you off as to the biological well-being of a location. If you don't see a dumpster, you might assume the neighborhood has a fever. Or, on the other hand, you might assume that the dumpsters are hidden in the basements, repressed into the unconscious, as happens in the "better" neighborhoods. What might Freud say about the genuine well-being of such neighborhoods?

Now Doc, look again, let the city be your psychiatric patient now; New York City, the little neurotic, is laid out on your couch. The host building is the multi-levelled mind. The contents of the dumpster are the results of the psychoanalytic session, all those repressed urges, those Oedipal complexes and second childhoods, those dirty desires denied, those primal glimpses and screams, even the transference itself, it's all in there, in the dumpster. The dumpster itself is the site of transference. It's the psychological DNA of a building. It's the double helix unwound.

But the golden dumpster is something yet again. It's psychological space renewed or rendered whole, like the timelessness of the unconscious, like the potential space of infantile unity with the phallic mother, like the Lacanian realm of the imaginary. Like Judy Garland's Emerald City somewhere over the rainbow.

